

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-13 are pending. Claims 1, 4-8 and 12 are independent. Claims 1 and 4-8 are hereby amended. Claims 9-13 are newly added. No new matter is added by these amendments. Support for the amended recitations in the claims is found throughout the specification and specifically from page 32, line 17 to page 18, line 10. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103

Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,966,352 to Sawabe et al.

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Sawabe et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,745,643 to Mishina.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

“A recording/reproduction apparatus...comprising...

classification means for classifying a state of at least one end of the range of reproduction depending on whether a picture precedes a picture at a connection point or data of a picture follows the picture at the connection point...” (emphasis added)

As understood by Applicants, U.S. Patent No. 5,966,352 to Sawabe et al.

relates to an information recording medium that includes a plurality of first information pieces each of which is reproduced successively in time by a reproducing apparatus; a plurality of second information pieces each of which is successively positioned on the information recording medium, one or more of the second information piece constituting the first information piece; a plurality of third information pieces each of which is individually reproducible and is a unit for jump reproduction by the reproducing apparatus, one or more of the third information piece constituting the second information pieces; at least one related information piece included in the third information piece and relating to a reproduction order and a reproduction method of the second information pieces; at least one reproduction control information piece referred to by the reproducing apparatus and relating to a reproduction order and a reproduction method of the first information pieces.

As understood by Applicants, U.S. Patent No. 5,745,643 to Mishina relates to video data to be reproduced that is stored in a file in a video title set secured in an information recording area on an optical disk. In the beginning area of the video title set, video title set information for managing the video title set has been written. The video title set information is provided with a table for managing the video title set information. In the table, the attributes

peculiar to the video data stored in the title set have been written. By referring to the management table, the video data to be reproduced is set in a reproducing system.

Applicants submit that Sawabe and Mishina, taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above-identified features of claim 1. Specifically, Applicants submit that there is no teaching or suggestion of a classification means for classifying a state of at least one end of the range of reproduction depending on whether a picture precedes a picture at a connection point or data of a picture follows the picture at the connection point, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 is patentable.

For reasons similar to or somewhat similar to those described above with regard to independent claim 1, amended independent claims 4-8 are also believed to be patentable.

Therefore, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 4-8 are patentable.

III. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

The other claims are dependent from one of the independent claims, discussed above, and are therefore believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

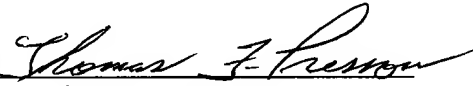
In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference or references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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